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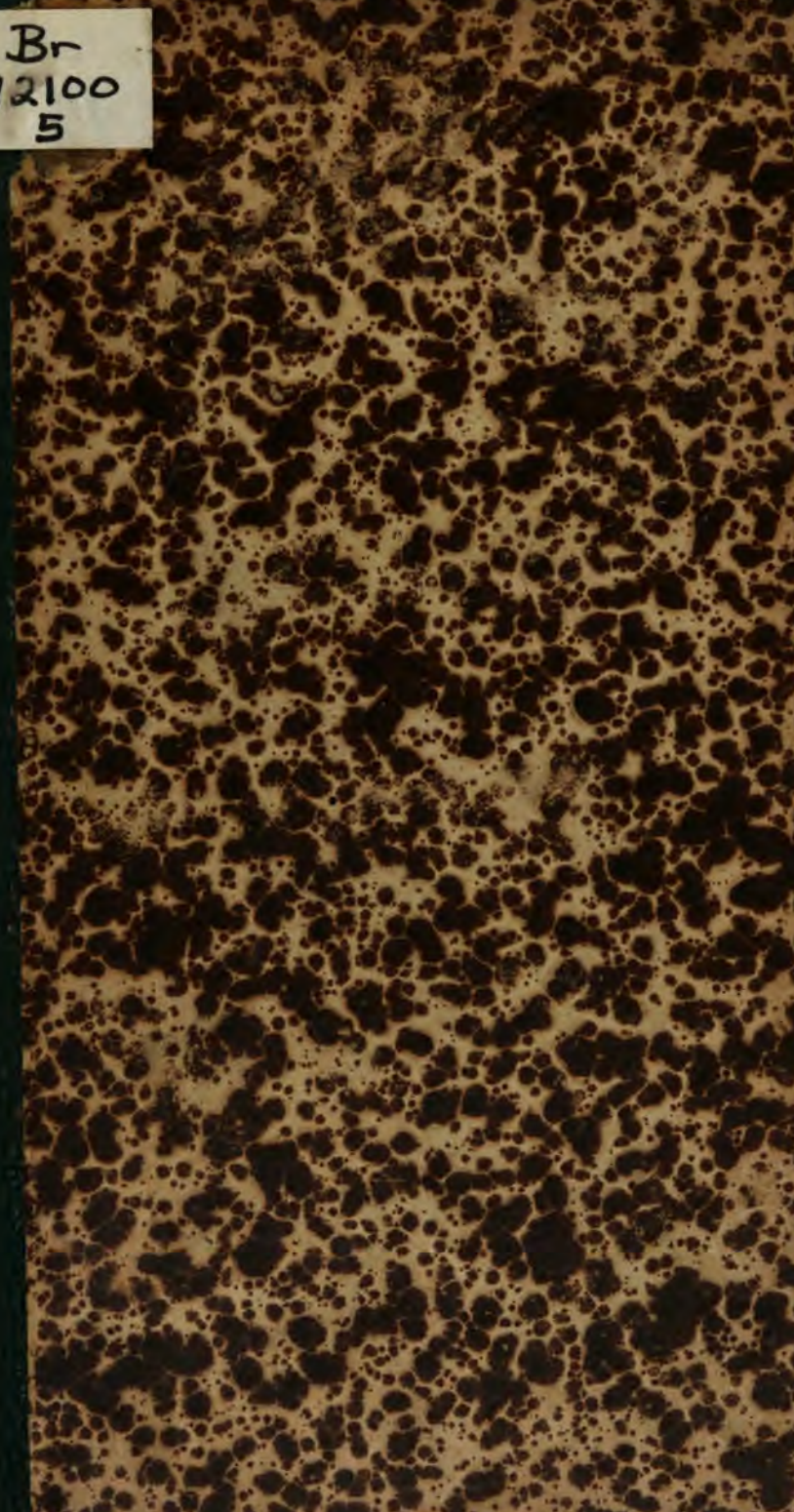
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IRISH AFFAIRS,

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THE CLOSE OF

1825.

BY
GEORGE ENSOR, Esq.

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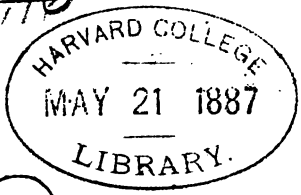
PRINTED BY JOSEPH C. SCULLY,
BOOKSELLER and PUBLISHER, 35, UPPER ORMOND-QUAY,

AND SOLD IN LONDON BY
EFFINGHAM WILSON, ROYAL EXCHANGE.

1826.

W. B. Borthwick

Orig 485, 178.5



*Dr. F. A. Green,
Boston.*

IRISH AFFAIRS,

AT

THE CLOSE OF

1825.

IT is difficult to speak on Irish affairs, and impossible to be silent: hitherto the Catholic question annually presented some new and extraordinary aspect, but in the last session of Parliament, its beginning and progress, its collateral incidents and direct adventures, the pauses which preceded its disgrace and its signal catastrophe,—omitting the insurgent evils which rise from its tomb, are altogether strange and portentous; for Catholic Emancipation was to be followed by disfranchisement, the Legislature that was to grant privileges to the opulent and exalted to-day, on the morrow was to withdraw the rights of the people, and all this was one complicated measure. Thus good and evil, by these provisions, stood not as contrary but coincident, while the Catholic Clergy were to be pensioned by a Protestant Government, and thus the Established Church, split and shaken through its nave to its topmost spire, with its tithes and proctors, and ecclesias-

tical courts, and all its tyranny, was to be propped and buttressed by the Catholic Church and by the Catholic Priesthood. The consequences of all this prodigious medley were necessary and disastrous. This edifice, founded on vicious principles, and for most wicked purposes, broke down in all its parts—its intended supports became its obvious overthrow, and their ruinous incumbrance crushed this after-Babel, and confounded its builders.—Then union ceased—confidence changed to distrust—affection to enmity—kindly discourse to mutual recrimination, surmises, reports, statements, charges made, were met by denials, by vituperation, by sophistry, by unredeemed promises, till at last there is an utter wreck of Ireland's hopes. Such has been the fate of these base proceedings on this great measure, *winged* by the sage and confiding friends of Catholic Emancipation—And never were such wings used or imagined since that evil day, when—

“ ~~-----~~ The adversary of God and man,
Satan, with thoughts inflam'd of high'st design,
Put on swift wings, and tow'rd's the gates of hell
Explored his solitary flight.”

In unfolding the fallen state of Ireland, it will be necessary to recall past events, if those can be past whose smart we suffer. In developing causes, I shall, as much as will permit, confine myself to authentic documents, such as cannot or have not been denied, and narrowing my remarks to the point at issue, at the same time claiming my privilege to employ all honest aids to support truth and to protect the people. I

shall, in the course of this disquisition, be frequently obliged to speak austere of measures, and men; yet, if I trespass by reprehension beyond the urgency of the occasion, I shall be much to blame, for I have formerly, and on all questions, and on the present, when no measure or limit seems to be acknowledged by some disputants, been treated with reserve or approbation. The Journals who have participated in this contest, have been gracious to me; I have received the most marked attention from the *Weekly Register*; the *Evening Post*, which, in opposition to me, favored the disfranchisement bill, seemed to weaken its power as it extended its courtesy; while the mere Government Journals, and the High-church Press, notice my efforts in their round of official obloquy, in a mild or mitigated tone.

As to individuals, known and unknown, those who, like the squaws amidst the high trees and the thicket, fire from the columns of newspapers, ambushed under P.'s and Q.'s and A.'s and O's, they have sent no barbed arrows against me.—Even *Junius Hibernicus*, apparently, by the compound appellation, armed with the point and the shillelagh, did not write a single paragraph till he inverted his weapon, changing the sharpened quill for the feather of the “wing.” Another, I forget his designation, but not less than a *Jupiter Tonans*, who indeed accused me of defending the forty-shilling freeholders, because their disfranchisement would strengthen Protestantism, of which I am, he says, a component part, ar-

gued most politely, not less so than Mrs. Malaprop, in whose argument every third word was on the side of her opponent. Then there was the *Special Correspondent*: he also then, as under other titles, *invita Minerva*, was complimentary, though he also concluded that I was a Protestant, and, being such, he considered it obtrusive that I should interrupt the disfranchisement project. Whatever I am, Protestant or Catholic, I am an Irishman, root and branch, which includes all sects in Ireland, as man, all the coloured population of the earth; but whether Catholic, Protestant, Dissenter, or Separatist, the "wings" have enlarged the sphere of the Catholic Bill, increasing the general sympathy into an universal interest; for the bill and the wings tended to increase the taxes of the people, to decrease mainly their franchises, to multiply by a double operation the power and influence of the crown, and altogether to throw back interminably all prospect of relief from tithes, or of parliamentary reform—making bad worse, and limiting exertion as it almost ended hope.

To the business;—At the beginning of 1825 the people of Ireland were united, and they pursued their object with such zeal and effect, that many of all orders and religions joined their cause, and even participated in their Association—the Catholic Association latterly amounted to thousands, the Catholic Rent also flowed from every parish, and strangers contributed to the fund. Then the Marquess Wellesley and Mr. Plunkett determined to disband the Association: Mr. Plunkett

attempted to ground a penal law on a public prosecution, for that was the object of the bill of indictment presented by his means against Mr. O'Connell. On this failing, Mr. Plunkett applied to the House of Commons, and the Imperial Parliament, which really or virtually has no kindred with Ireland, was more attentive than a Dublin Grand Jury to the Attorney-General—for an Irish Jury, though partly of the Orange faction, has some relish for the liberties of Ireland. The Anti-Association Bill being proposed in Parliament, the Association commissioned Deputies to proceed to London, in hopes that by their means the penal bill might be arrested. The Commons denied the application.

While this bill was pursuing its courses through Parliament, by and with the advice and advocacy of Mr. Plunkett, Mr. O'Connell sought an interview with him. I refer to Mr. O'Connell's first letter to the Catholics of Louth for the fact. Mr. O'Connell says, Mr. Plunkett was his *personal enemy*, but in his regard for the interests of the Catholics he flung to the winds his personal wrongs. In Mr. O'Connell's communication with Mr. Plunkett, there was an arrangement between these gentlemen, or something like an arrangement or condition, for whatever was done does not appear to have been done with the approbation or privity of others. This is extraordinary in every view. Mr. O'Connell, after raging against Mr. Plunkett for preferring a bill of indictment against himself, and extinguishing the Catholic Association, goes singly to Mr. Plunkett's house,

is closeted with him, and re-appears after the intercourse all admiration and panegyric. This is most extraordinary. Mr. O'Connell, in a report of the debates at the Catholic Board in 1813, is represented "to have set his face totally against individual communications;" and this then applied to individuals, not Ministers of the Crown. Yet did Mr. O'Connell individually communicate with Mr. Plunkett, a Minister of the Crown. What caused this revolution in the language of Mr. O'Connell towards Mr. Plunkett is inexplicable—never was change so sudden and entire. Mr. O'Connell had transferred the Catholic petition from Mr. Plunkett to Sir Francis Burdett; he had afterwards denounced Mr. Plunkett. "I would not be honest, if I did not proclaim aloud my conviction, that the Marquess Wellesley and Mr. Plunkett are not friends to the Catholic cause; I ask not their friendship, I care not for their friendship; as a Catholic, then, I invite open hostility."—*Evening Post*, Feb. 10. Yet Mr. O'Connell passed to England, charged with the whole electric rage of the whole Catholic Association, and the lightning is arrested, and that which was to blast and consume, becomes a halo and a glory to illustrate and adorn the resplendent patriot, Mr. Conyngham Plunkett. I know of no improvement last Session in Mr. Plunkett's conduct or language in favor of Catholic Emancipation. He had been always zealous, apparently, and able; but I do know that Mr. Plunkett did extinguish the Association, and that to use Mr. O'Connell's language, he was "the great advocate of the wings." These are the only

changes that are ostensible in Mr. Plunkett's conduct in Catholic affairs ; yet, under these circumstances, Mr. Plunkett became, during this after-period, the object of Mr. O'Connell's rapturous encomium. All this is strange, passing strange. I do not think Mr. O'Connell is corrupt ; if I thought so I should say so, for I never shall say less than I think on matters involving the right of the many, and I should have no conception how delicacy to an individual should interfere with the exposition of truth in public concerns ; but I do say, these matters induce suspicions, and they must have induced suspicions in any case, and against any man. Nor are these the only unlucky incidents furnished by Mr. O'Connell himself to excite the doubt of mankind : he says he was offered £1,200 a year, merely to abate the violence of his language. Now, though the exposure of such a proposal carried some reproach—for it is an insult to be thought by any one, high or low, so loosely principled as to endure the actual offer of a bribe—yet I wonder that this offer was not at the time resented as an injury or an outrage, and the person proclaimed who had so transgressed. Mr. O'Connell says the offer was made by a person *so high in rank that although there were some, there were but few higher in rank or influence*. The higher the better ; a common rascal is unworthy of public disgrace, while his example is comparatively inefficient. What the etiquette is on such occasions I am ignorant : it is said Newgate has its laws of honor. Mark how the great villain and the little villain are treated : to obtain money on false pretences is punishable by law ; but to offer

money on false pretences, merely to change flats to sharps, in a gentleman's language, is not criminal. Again : to offer a sum of money to obtain a place under Government, is criminal, and Percival had a tinman punished for such a proposal to himself ; but to offer many hundreds of pounds, with a *continuando*, by which not a place, but a man was to be bought, is neither punishable by law or equity—he is not to be exposed to public indignation.

Mr. O'Connell has also proclaimed to the world, that very lately overtures had been made to him by persons in authority, that if the Catholics abstained from petitioning against tithes and other grievances connected with the "Church established by law," they might hope to have the Lords and Commons opened to their nobles and gentry. To this Mr. O'Connell says my answer was, "We are collecting the Rent for the benefit of the people ; for them we are bound to seek protection and redress—we require no favor ;" and he proceeds to state, "that so long as the mockery exists, of making the people pay Church Rates where there is no Church, and the tithe where there is no Parson, so long must we continue to protest and appeal." This was spoken in the Catholic Association, and is reported in the *Dublin Evening Post*, February 10, 1825 ; yet Mr. O'Connell leaped at the Disfranchisement Bill, and the Pension Bill, as appears by his letter of the 7th of March—that is, in less than one month a relief from tithe is forgotten, and the Catholic Rent is forgotten, and the peasantry, who are reputed

serfs and criminals who should be disfranchised. Why the tenth part of this series of wonders would ground a suspicion even against him, who, of all the ancients, was called *Just*. The world must judge from circumstances: besides the suspicions arising from such unaccountable proceedings, there is a generic suspicion respecting the whole race of practising politicians, and every day strengthens suspicions respecting them. It appears from *Moore's Life of Sheridan*, that Sheridan's advocacy of radical principles was personated for fraudulent, or at least for selfish, purposes. It also appears by *Fouché's Memoirs*, that the victories of Bonaparte were gained, not more by skill and bravery than by bribes; and that the wife of Bonaparte, the beloved Josephine, was a spy on her husband, just in proportion to the bribe of this Minister of Police. I repeat, I do not say Mr. O'Connell was corrupted; but he trifled so with his reputation, that he tempted suspicion, and impaired confidence, not only in himself, but in the Catholic cause. No man can be too cautious of Ministerial amities, or even of interchanging courtesies with the agents or ministers of power, for he who mingles with them and escapes, may raise, as mariners placed votive tablets in the temple of Neptune, a monument not only to Virtue but to Fortune: in this case Fortune is chief among all the deities.

After Mr. O'Connell's interview with Mr. Plunkett, he composed his Letter, dated London, March the 7th. In that Letter, after praising Mr. Plunkett, as almost super-human in his ex-

ertions to carry this Bill, and having stated, *I firmly expect that this Bill will pass into a Law*, he proceeds to the Bill, affirming, that *the allegiance of our Dignitaries, which was never doubted, will thus be placed within the view of the law; but nothing at all of Vote or Vetoistical arrangement is sought or desired.* In the next paragraph he says, it is proposed, to make a provision for the Clergy by the Bill. In the next, and in the eighth paragraph, he says it has been suggested by many Members of Parliament, connected with Government, that the Elective Franchise in counties, but not in cities, should be raised from forty shillings to five or ten pounds. This was the substance of the letter, (hereafter I shall consider the reasoning and observations of the writer,) which was read to the Catholic Association, the 10th. of March, and which was received with hearts and speeches "lighter than vanity;" yet let us not condemn too rashly the Catholic Association for their conduct on that day, though there was enough to alarm men little versed in negotiations, and called on the instant for their approbation. In this letter the Association were treated as children at a show-box. They were just allowed to peep through the magnifying-glass at the shifting scene of "The World Displayed." Indeed it was rather the "Wonders of the Celestial World" they were invited to glance at." Here they were to see "little bigotry remaining in England, and still less of Anti-Irish feeling."—This was wonderful; it was earth transformed to Heaven, and ever and anon, the Association was told, in the third, fifth, and ninth paragraphs,

that Emancipation would pass this Session of Parliament—they were told that in respect to the Freehold Wing, that it is not necessary to be in haste to form an opinion on the subject, as before any measure of this kind is adopted, full time will be given for deliberation, and for consulting the sound sense of the Irish people. They were also solicited not to give any opinion on the change of the elective franchise until the bill was printed—or until he, Mr. O'Connell, had arrived amongst them. These miracles, which exceed Hohenlohe's as Ussa does a wart, told in the hurly-burly of a Catholic Association, are the only palliating remarks I can imagine for this Catholic Assembly being silent on this tremendous exposition.

But the Association continued in the same hey-day mood, and of silent service, after its Members might have collected their scattered thoughts.—On the 16th of March, there was a grand muster. Mr. Sheil made his first appearance after his mission to London. Preparatory to his speech, there were some strange things said of communications received from the Secretary, from Mr. Purcell O'Gorman. Some Gentlemen wished to see them, or hear them read. No, said Mr. Sheil, you have a right to hear them, but it is not expected you should take cognizance of them—your Deputation advises you to adjourn till Friday. Mr. Sheil also said, these resolutions sought to be heard, were not resolutions; “they are merely the intimations of an intention on the part of the body to pursue a certain course, which, however, is not fully de-

cided on." He then, after detailing events, and praising the exertions of the Deputation and individuals, is reported to have said: "I will say, then, that we ought to come to the consideration of this important topic with sentiments of candour and conciliation; we ought to enter into this negotiation with Government; the Catholics of Ireland ought to enter into this contract with the Legislature, &c."—*Weekly Register*, March 12, 1825. Did ever bombast equal this? and that, too, in the very *Register* in which this appears. Mr. O'Connell's language is the reverse of Mr. Sheil's, for Mr. O'Connell writes, "If the Legislature think fit to legislate on these subjects, it will do so without consulting us."—*Letter, London*, March 16. But it is not the contradiction of those Leaders, (Mr. O'Connell has avowed his leadership,) that is the most remarkable; it is the rhetorical artifice of the speaker, who puts one for all. Who among the negotiating parties were "the Catholics of Ireland?" in this statement? The Catholics of Ireland were not negotiators in their own persons nor by delegation. The Catholic Association were not delegated by the Catholics—nor were the Deputation, delegated by the Association to negotiate or contract, nor did the Association negotiate or contract. Whatever was done on the part of the Catholics was done by Mr. O'Connell; his own words are: "I believe I could at that time have easily procured a vote from the great majority of the Deputation favorable to the plan of acquiescing in the wings. I am surprised to perceive that you seem to have forgotten, how often I disclaimed seeking the

protection of any such vote, and I declared that I would act upon my own responsibility, after the letters I had written to the Association had been published and universally acquiesced in."

This is Mr. O'Connell's statement in his letter to Mr. D. O'Reilly, *Limerick, 25th October*. Then, according to Mr. Sheil, Mr. O'Connell is the Catholics of Ireland. As to Mr. Sheil's other parties in the negotiation, the Government, who were the Government? Certainly not Mr. Canning, nor Mr. Peel, nor Lord Eldon, nor Lord Liverpool. The Government was then Mr. Bunkett, and Mr. Daniel O'Connell, was the Catholics of Ireland, according to the florid and figurative prose of Mr. Sheil.

Mr. Sheil having made a long speech, which was greatly applauded, he was followed by, an honest man, Mr. Richard O'Gorman—I quote his entire speech as reported in the *Weekly Register*. "Mr. Richard O'Gorman stated, that his opinion was against the principle of granting a pension to the Catholic Clergy, or robbing our honest forty-shilling freeholders, who even contributed a penny to the Rent, of his franchise; and was about to take a view of the effects which such measures were calculated to produce, when he was called to order by Mr. Conway," &c. What it is to be an *orderly* to silence and the wings! After some ordinary affairs the meeting adjourned to Friday.

On that day the Association met, when a letter of Mr. O'Connell was read, dated *London*,

March 16.—This was like the former; in it silence was enjoined; and still the vain hope was fed, *that Emancipation was at hand, unless we retard or postponed it by senseless calumnies or unreasonable apprehensions.* It was also stated—"that every detail of the great measure will be brought before the public deliberately; and if there be any thing suggested which could alarm either Protestant or Catholic timidity, abundant time will be given to canvass the merits of the proposed arrangement, and nothing will be concluded on without affording sufficient opportunity to oppose any thing worthy of opposition." The writer having obtruded some remarks on Mr. Lawless, he proceeded: "In the first place, there is as yet nothing arranged with respect to a provision for our Clergy, or with regard to any change in the elective franchise. It would have been wise to wait such an arrangement, before it were condemned in terms of harshness and reproach." Here, again, Mr. O'Connell solicits the Irish to procrastinate discussion on these measures, which he repeats thus:—"Fourthly, as to the change in the Elective Franchise, that is matter of serious consideration, and must be weighed well before it is adopted; at present it is but in embryo, and may never attain shape or regular form." Yet, notoriously the measure was determined on. This Letter was also inserted in the minutes. There was the same flush of hope, the same hubbub of cheering, and the same silence on those points which should have moved the least sentient things to rise and protest. Yet the Catholic Association "died and

made no sign." How did this happen? by management and delusion. The following expression of Mr. O'Connell, in his evidence before the Lords, is remarkable; he stated the 11th of March, midtime between his two letters, sent to the Association, of the 7th and 16th of that month, "Do you not think that, in consequence of the present complete union existing among all the Catholics in Ireland, and in consequence of their being now under the guidance of men capable of appreciating the real benefit which would be derived to the country from the equalization of civil privileges, by means of that influence, those persons, so seeing the real advantages of the measure, would be able to quiet any jealousies or animosities which might arise from the supposed change of the law on the part of the forty-shilling freeholders." To which Mr. O'Connell replied: "Without venturing to adopt any part of the question, which implies a complimentary expression, I have no doubt that would be easily effected by the persons who have been acting for the body at large hitherto. I know it would be very much their desire to do it; and I can answer, that measures have been already taken upon the persuasion, such as there is, of carrying emancipation. I have reason to hope, that those preliminary measures have met with success."

No doubt these measures succeeded for the time, as it appears, by Mr. Conway's statement, that at that very time when the Association was addressed by the *silentaries*, this assembly was, in general, adverse to the wings. He says: "upon

these two great questions (the wings) it is admitted on the one side, that he, Mr. O'Connell, had no authority from the late Association, which unquestionably represented the feelings and sentiments of the Catholic Body in Ireland; nor, on the other hand, did that Body, though apprised by Mr. O'Connell of his views, come to any resolution on the subject. We believe that the majority of the Association were against those measures, or wings, as they are somewhat fantastically called, but it was the opinion of almost every man, that the utmost caution should be preserved in Ireland, because a false step, or an intemperate proceeding on our part, would be sure to embarrass the progress of a measure, which it was generally expected was advancing towards a triumphant completion," &c. This is odd reasoning:—then the majority of the Association were against the "wings," but almost every man in it thought he ought to be silent, because it was expected the bill and wings were about to be passed into laws. Nor can I understand how a majority disapproving of two out of three bills, all one measure, because they were about to be passed together, could be considered a triumphant completion. To succeed in pothering men capable of such reasoning was certainly no triumph to any political practitioner. But what was the consequence of this silence? Why, Mr. O'Connell presumed on that silence to conclude with Mr. Plunkett a treaty, or contract, or negotiation, or confederacy respecting the wings, for I know not how to designate so extraordinary a proceeding in one reputed to counteract the

Anti-Association Bill. Thus the Associators imagined they were acting the parts of profound statesmen, when they were merely subletting themselves to egregious dupes. It was *understood*, we are told, that preparatory to taking the chair at the Association, nothing should transpire respecting the wings. Thus, barn-theatricals omitted the part of Hamlet by particular desire! On these measures the Associators improved on *Burleigh* in the *Critic*, for it does not appear that, except one, any of them indulged even a shake of the head. When you meet again, Brother-Associators, (for I am an Associator, though not being in Dublin for many months after my admission and the dissolution of the society, I never met the Association) make some penitential efforts to compensate, if possible, for your most abject silence—and beware not to re-act the solemn mockery of mutes around the last sad remains of Ireland's liberty, for if you do, mankind will aggravate the voice of Parliament, and pronounce not only your death but your damnation.

This silence was inculcated by Mr. O'Connell, in subserviency to Mr. Plunkett's great scheme, his "Double Arrangement," and Bill Tripartite. This silence was acquiesced in under some indefinite fancy of approaching emancipation.—I believe the morbid hope of the Irish is almost incurable. What was to encourage hope last session? In 1778 the Catholics had restored to them the right of property—in 1793 they obtained the elective franchise. What similarity has the present state of peace, and those periods of jeo-

pardy, in the colonies and of Europe revolutionizing. Distress is the season for Ireland's hope; prosperity, of Ireland's desperation. The successes of William and Marlborough were the sign and seal of Ireland's oppression, and the loss of the provinces of America, the harbinger of rights restored. Blessed state—thrice blessed constitution, by which one half of the empire is taught to expect relief by the probable ruin of the other. The late confidence of success utterly astounds me: confidence in political promises is a tenth told tale, and in the last telling, it is in Ireland as attractive as in the first.

The Catholics were to be emancipated after the Union; this was one part of the general lie of that day. Then they were to be emancipated when the Prince was freed from the Regency restrictions; then they were to be emancipated when George the Fourth was *very* King—that was certain; then they were to be emancipated after his return from Ireland, and any one who should doubt the result was charged with “flat burglary:” and so it went on, when, at the latter end of last February, or beginning of March, and just when the Anti-Association Bill was passing, it was declared on authority, *which could not be mistaken*, that the Catholics were to be emancipated forthwith, and among the changes proclaimed it was said, that Lords Liverpool and Eldon were *coming round*—in short, some Journals, the most clear-seeing and ingenious, speculated on the language that Lord Eldon would use, when, after fifty years exclusive Protestantism,

he should acknowledge his sins, and prepare to die liberal.

All this, then, as now, appeared downright fatuity to me, and I repeatedly published my opinion.—First, the notion that the King was earnest to liberate the Catholics of Ireland is not the least wonder in the speculation. The King came over to Ireland, because he was uneasy in England; yet some considered that it was a “Sentimental Journey” of Majesty. While in Ireland, he made Lord Fingall a Knight of St. Patrick, and on departing, he directed Lord Sidmouth to publish his advice to the people of Ireland, which was circulated by thousands through the Post-Office. It was considered the Reconciliation Panacea.

Much was expected from this parting admonition, signed by that eminent statesman, Sidmouth. With regard to the contents of the document, the Royal advice was good, but it was impracticable. His gracious Majesty advised the Irish to forget their former vexations, and to live in perfect harmony and good-will together. This, I admit, would induce some prospect of Catholic Emancipation, inasmuch as his Majesty, if he permitted his great mind to think ever so little, must know that when one portion of the same people, and that by much the smaller, is favored, and the other rejected, and taxed to support a Church alien to their religion, perfect suavity could not possibly subsist among parties so capriciously and so partially treated. Now the King’s advice did induce a reasonable belief in the King’s support

of Catholic relief, as his advice could only be available by Emancipation, which Emancipation must mainly depend on the King's authority with his Ministry in forwarding that measure.

Shortly after the King's arrival in England, Lord Wellesley was substituted for Lord Talbot: then hope was renewed. Afterwards his Majesty placed his Catholic subjects in Hanover, on the same footing as his Protestant subjects; but this is the continental policy—liberality in this respect is as much a principle throughout the kingdoms of Europe, as illiberality is the true policy in England. Such is the custom, that, I believe, if the Duke of York was Sovereign of Hanover, or Sir Abraham Bradley King, the immaculate stationer, or Lord Eldon, or Lady Rossmore, or any other old lady or gentleman, that the Catholics of Hanover would now be liberated. But never did the King show any disposition to free the Catholics of Ireland; on the contrary, the true indications ran all the other way. If the King's disposition were favorable, would the Minister be so averse as he has ever been? Would Lord Eldon, the most wily of all England's politicians, be so hardened in his hostility? I had always expressed my disbelief in the King's disposition to liberate the Catholics, and a contrary belief in some of them was, I fear, mere craft, which uniformly ensnares the impostors themselves.

The Duke of York, after his speech, at once belligerent and sacramental, having joined his Majesty at the theatre, indirectly expressed the

King's Anti-Catholic opinions. On the prudence of the Ducal oration I would not dare to offer a comment. The King can do no wrong, and the Heir Apparent must be always right; but I remember an answer of a French historian, which always struck me for its *naïveté*: "How shall you contrive," said the Duke of Burgundy to the Abbé Choisy, "to insert in your history, that Charles the Sixth was a fool?" "My Lord," replied the historian, "will say he was a fool."—Whatever doubts there may have been of the King's disposition towards Catholic Emancipation in Ireland, there can be none now, after the documents afforded by Mr. Moore in his "Life of Sheridan." I therefore dismiss this topic in the words of Homer's hero, when wronged by Agamemnon, King of Men: "I wish you much solace in your king." But the most signal waste of hope was in making Mr. Plunkett's advice the ground of the expectation, he who has ran all courses, and been on all sides. Did not Mr. Plunkett suspect that the King was not strenuous to emancipate the Catholics? Had not Mr. Plunkett, this wonder of a man, this superhuman politician, this "present deity," any suspicion that all was not friendly in high places? Were there not other notices—was not Mr. Canning's words dispiriting? He talked of *the alienation of the public mind of England from the Catholic question, which, the first night of the session, I stated it to be my confident belief, had taken place.*—*Traveller, Feb. 16.* Did he not know that the Bishops and the Duke were hostile, and Eldon and Liverpool; what then were Mr.

Plunkett's ostensible means of overpowering this confirmed hostility, that had already defeated majorities of the Commons? "The Wings." Oh, Bishop Wilkins! how are you and your "Discourse on the possibility of flying to the moon," out-mooned by our Irish Attorney-General? If he was sincere, these Wings were Mr. Plunkett's great associates, and his reply to Mr. Brougham's speech against the Disfranchisement Wing, was as sensitive as if every word that Mr. Brougham uttered tore a feather from the pinton. It appears that Mr. Plunkett thought, or seemed to think, that the wings would mistify the collective wisdom of the nation—that they would act like the spreading vanes of the fabled Roc, in Araby the Happy, and thicken the eclipse over the minds of the British Legislature. Yet they had reversed effects; they were as allies, which, in the day of battle, turned their arms on the associates, and added confusion to the defeated: instead of increasing friends they created enemies, and they changed the *major* into the *minor*, while they afforded new and well-founded arguments against Catholic Emancipation, and thus Bill and Wings were precipitated "plumb down ten thousand *fathom deep*." I said, "such were miserable politicians, if they were honest," in my Address to the Irish, *March* the 21st; and I repeat it, for the arrangement and the expectation excited were so absurd, that something more than a doubt of honesty arises against Mr. Plunkett, who could in his station encourage such fantastic projects. Catholic Emancipation never can pass till it becomes a Cabinet measure; for to suppose

that it could pass against the apparent wishes of the Cabinet or the Minister, is to suppose a dissolution of the Ministry. Will the Plunketts or the Cannings risk this? Believe it not: Mr. Canning, sooner than not be employed profitably, worked under Lord Castlereagh, whose inability he proclaimed; we all have seen that Mr. Plunkett loves office as the limpit the rock which the beating sea fixes more firmly to its sticking-place.

I do not, cannot believe Mr. Plunkett sincere. I cannot imagine he believed the Catholic Bill, so associated, could pass; but it was *politic*, that is damnable, to nourish such belief—it abated the hatred of the Irish against the projectors and advocates of the Anti-Association Bill, of which he was chief—it changed the Bottoms from *roaring lions* to *Thisbes*, with *monstrous little voices*; and pass or not pass, the Bill with the Wings must have been most destructive to the Irish. That Mr. Plunkett should have so acted, I am not surprised; but that any one should have been abused in such adverse circumstances by such a man, amazes me. When Mr. Plunkett, in matters in which he is sincere and zealous, fails so perpetually in his legislative acts—his Burial Bill—his vaunted charter of toleration to the Catholics—his *Ex-Officio* prosecutions—his indictments, for which he has obtained a name, which will outlive his title under the Crown; yet, this is the man who wrought a change of feeling in Mr. O'Connell, not less extraordinary than the encounters and friendships in the field of battle in romantic

story, who still imposes on the blind, for they vote him thanks, and commit petitions to him, not that it signifies who presents this or that petition; it is those who *second* the petitions who will prevail.

The Bill and Wings, "abortive, monstrous, and untimely, mixed," having utterly failed, the Deputies returned to Ireland—then began the Aggregates and the like, those who were piano and panegyric in London, having touched their mother earth, without intermediate modulation, raged in bravura. What gusty speeches, what gigantic nonsense, issued from our conciliating and mellifluous negotiators.—Then were some individuals thanked thrice over by the same meeting—praise costs nothing. The Association was praised, and that emanation from it, the Deputation to London, was complimented with various resolutions. Mr. Sheil had had already talked of their *unwearied zeal and unceasing vigilance*, and so forth, till an ordinary man would suppose that each Deputy had exceeded Hercules and his *twelve labors*. I am unacquainted with any act of the Deputation. Mr. O'Connell was very prominent, and he did take care not to be confounded with the Deputation. Indeed, I read in a Newspaper, an account taken from a Magazine, that some Deputies, "the prime of order and of might," dined in company with four Dukes, and a proportionable number of Earls and Viscounts, at which entertainment Mr. O'Connell did not say any thing more worthy notice, than "I am vastly fond of ale." The

Deputation did nothing—they did not, with the exception of Lord Killeen, when Mr. Lawless was to be put down, uphold their countryman.—This is a curious incident. Mr. Lawless moved for the appointment of the original Deputation: Mr. Finn, I believe, proposed that others should be advised to resort to London also. On this Mr. Lawless passed to the capital; he associated with the Deputies; yet, on Mr. Lawless objecting to the Wings, his right to be a Deputy was denied: and these men would exclude their countryman from their Deputation, when they were themselves complaining of their own exclusion from the State. Did they not perceive that this was a topic pregnant with dangerous conclusions?—but it was worse, for it is obvious that the terms of the invitation to persons of different professions and ranks to proceed to London, were not to restrict, but to embrace. The conduct of the Deputies on this occasion regarded the Deputation itself. In respect of their conduct in public affairs, the Deputation did *not* say any thing on the Wings; they did less, if Mr. O'Connell's memory be exact, for he says, that a resolution was passed by the Deputation, as he recollects, purporting to be “a distinct declaration, that the Deputation did *not*, and would *not*, in any way, interfere relative to the Wings, in the capacity of Delegates.”—*Letter to Mr. D. O'Reilly, October 25.* Thus, then, this “topless Deputation” did nothing; nay, voted they would say nothing; they determined to play the simple game of whist, and as they wanted one to make up the party, they invited the Catholic Association to

take the cards of *Dumby*. No matter, all were to be praised—the labour of praising succeeded to the labour of doing nothing, and in this there was great harmony, for the heads of the Association, and of the Deputation, formed the identical Cabinet Councils which prepared the encomiastic resolutions, the resolutions being merely as flash paragraphs by advertising egotists.

All these tricks and trivialities could no longer hold the people in abject darkness: they had read—they had time to think—they communed with each other. Mr. O'Connell was utterly mistaken when he considered the *clamour* on disfranchising the forty-shilling freeholders would be *little*, or that it would be *irrational and easily put down*.—*Evidence, Lords*, p. 166.—He and Mr. Sheil would be just as able to put down this clamour, as they would be to stop the coming tide with a bulrush.—Now for the Bill.

The Bill provides, that the King shall appoint Commissioners, who shall form a Board; that the Commissioners shall consist of persons in holy orders, professing the R. C. Religion, and exercising episcopal duties or functions in the R. C. Church, within Great Britain and Ireland; that the first Prelate named in the Commission shall be President, and that three of the said Commissioners shall form a Board; that the Commission shall be revocable at the pleasure of the King, but that a new Commission shall issue within fourteen days after the dissolution of the former.

The business of the Board was to be complicated and vexatious; its members were to take a particular oath; they were to administer oaths; they were to inquire into the characters of persons appointed to dignities in the Catholic Church; they were to give certificates of loyalty; besides, "all Bulls, Dispensations, and Instruments from the See of Rome, or from any Foreign Body or Individual whatever, acting under the said See, or under any other spiritual superior, the person or persons so receiving them, the same shall, within so many days after receiving the same, deliver the same, or cause it to be delivered, or the original, to the President of the said Board of Commissioners, who shall forthwith inspect the same." &c. Thus the Bill rambles onwards, superadding an oath with provisions, exceptions, &c. This comes of the adulterous union of Church and State, and of these Prelates and Pluralists, who, under the pretence of proping a monarchy, consume and torment the people.

Those yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
Surround it, as thou saw'st, hourly conceiv'd,
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite.

This Bill would introduce into Ireland a hyper-ecclesiastical Board. This novelty seems to be modelled on the College of Pontiffs in Pagan Rome; it is new and inquisitorial. Why this Board would become a Protestant Inquisition with Catholic *Familiars*. The members are to swear they will inquire, and decide justly on the result, and certify for the candidate's loyalty, &c.

Loyalty is the loosest expression in the English language; it might not be loyal to vote against the Court Candidate at an election, or to doubt that the Burial Bill was not a charter of toleration to the Catholics, and to belong to the Catholic Association might be reputed contrary to the spirit of loyalty, as our gracious King, at his opening speech last session, said, "The Association adopted proceedings irreconcilable with the spirit of the constitution." For the law makes criminal not only offences against indefinite terms, but even phantoms,—“Airs from Heaven and blasts from Hell” are protected by the Penal Majesty of the British Code. Besides other lurking crimes against *loyalty*, the Catholic Board were to be obliged to read all Bulls, Dispensations, and other Instruments, &c. And should then, on the inspection of these documents, find nothing in their judgment in any way injurious to the safety or tranquillity of the United Kingdom, or the Protestant Establishment in Church or State,” &c. they were directed forthwith to report the same to the Lord Lieutenant. Was ever such an office imposed on the Dignitaries of a different religion, in derision of their religion! Sir William Scott, on speaking against Mr. Plunkett's bill in 1821, which acknowledged a Protestant Church and a Catholic Church in Ireland, said it was “a double headed monster, unknown to the Constitution.” Two establishments would be monstrous indeed: but what is this Protestant-Catholic Board, particularly when we consider that these very Catholic Prelates, who, with all other Roman Catholics, are declared on

oath to be idolaters, by every individual composing this very Parliament, which thus imposed on these sworn idolaters, the safe-keeping of the Protestant Establishment in Church and State.

How were or are these Commissioners, for we shall have this bill again before Parliament, to be paid? No matter: suppose these Sovereign Pontiffs should not receive any extra-pension, is it probable that they would not relish power, and endeavour to extend and continue it? What reason is there for expecting that they would not assume an independent authority in Ireland, as the Patriarch of Constantinople renounced the successor of St. Peter at Rome? If history and experience do not suggest danger, even in entertaining such novelties, childishness and dotage possess men without an interval of manhood.

Again: who are to compose this Board of Roman Catholic Prelates? Are ordinary Bishops to be among its members? Then the Suffragan shall inquire into the loyalty and good conduct of him who may be his Metropolitan. Suppose the Board to consist of the four Archbishops, it is clear the Board must sit in Dublin, and to be effectual it must be permanent, for the persons receiving bulls, &c. are, as I have stated, to deliver them, in a definite number of days after receiving them, to the President of the said Board, who shall lay the same before the said Board, which Board shall forthwith inspect the same: therefore the day being specified for the delivery of these documents to the Board, and the Board

being required by law to inspect the same forthwith, it is clear the Board must sit *de die in diem*; that is, must hold a permanent session. Can the Catholic Bishops constitute such a Board, and perform their episcopal and paramount duties, to which they have been appointed by their Church? Whether these impossibilities were known to the framers of the bill, I cannot decide; but it is clear to me, that the bill was not intended to operate according to its seeming provisions. No man, the least acquainted with Catholic affairs, or with laws and regulations, can imagine that this bill could be executed. But Mr. Plunkett acted securely; if it does not pass, I have, said he, saved my consistency, for I have played the advocate to deceive the advocates: if it does pass, it will be ruinous in its direct operation, and yet so impracticable eventually, that it must be re-modelled to suit the purposes of Church and State. Mr. O'Connell said in his evidence, supposing Emancipation, "and if that system was not found to work well for the purposes of Government, there would be every advantage given to alter the system, so as to make it satisfactory to the Government." p. 160. And at still greater length he said, "The thing that would create a difficulty, and I think an impossibility of a satisfactory arrangement for the present, would be giving the Government the direct nomination, or even an indirect control, over it; distinguishing between domestic nomination and nomination by the Government. But I would wish to add to that, that if Catholic Emancipation were granted in the manner in which, if it is granted

at all, it ought to be, soothingly and generously, and were to work for two or three years in that way, those jealousies would be soon got over; that if the Government found they had reasons to state, that would justify them in stating them publicly, there would be no difficulty in going further, and giving an interference to Government upon the nomination, to any extent that was rationally required; and I do not presume it would be required otherwise than rationally.”—p. 162.—To be sure, Government never acted otherwise; and it would act in this case as the English Government has ever acted towards Ireland.

After the developement of the questionable practices of the framers of the Catholic Relief Bill, their indirect attempts to derange the Irish Church, and the necessary consequences of this Bill, to bring, by time and circumstances and *working*, the whole Priesthood within the pale of the Protestant establishment, it is almost surplusage to offer a few remarks on the Clerical Pension Bill:—this Bill, to make assurance doubly sure—this Bill so kindly intended to increase the comforts of the Catholic Clergy. What a change—why, Vertigo is the ruling deity. The English Government robbed the Catholic Clergy of all their wealth, and persecuted them with unrelenting vengeance. When, lo! this same Government, for it comes through their labyrinth, feels a penitential throb, and in pure love of the happiness and ease of this same Clergy, proposes to give them six-pence in the pound of the spoil

which they had wrested from them, and transferred to the Protestant Church. This proposal of the *golden link* is received in various ways—some say it is abominable; but they add, we will leave the Clerical Wing to the consideration of the Priesthood. This, I imagine, like many other courtesies, is burdensome to those who are honored. If the question were doctrine and discipline, there would be some reason for deferring to the Clergy; but this question is altogether unspiritualized and earthly.—(Though according to Homer, Jupiter drew by *golden links* all the gods to him.) The proposition was money-taking, money-giving, which has nothing Christian or Apostolic, or primitive, connected with it, unless Christ's driving the money changers from the temple may carry some remote allusion to the project. However, lest any Catholic should abstain from giving an opinion through affected respect for the Church, the Rev. Mr. Murphy, at the new Catholic Association, has freed them from that difficulty.—(*D. M. Post*, December 1.)—To be silent, and to require silence on this occasion, are parts of the treachery and stupidity that have characterized this after-time. If the laymen will not declare their sentiments, they impose on their Clergy the whole responsibility, and they will oblige them to bear up, singly and unassisted, against the attempt made on their credit with the people, and on their own independence.

This Pension Bill is not intended for the ease and honor of the Catholic Clergy, except as the oil of rhodium is mixed with arsenic by rat

catchers. Is it conceivable that two or three hundred thousand pounds should be granted in affection to the Irish Priesthood, by the Protestant Government of England? Observe: the pensions in this arrangement were to be imposed on them; the condition was onerous. The object is then confessed; but, say the dealers, a nice distinction, the Pension Bill was not to precede, but to follow the Emancipation Bill. Aye, there is much difference between *à parti ante et à parti post*. And Horace says that those who labour for wages paid, labour irksomely: then the Wing was to be converted into a tail. This is a preposterous, but a pretty fancy, to render a bribe innoxious; but the merit of the invention belongs to a *Dramatist*, and is above a century old. Here, said *Foigard*, are twenty Louis d'ores: "but wont this," said the moralizing *Mrs. Gipsev*, "look like a bribe?"—"That is as you shall take it; if you receive the money before hand it will be *logice*, a bribe; but if you take it afterwards, it will be only a gratification." The pension proposed was a bribe—a bribe from a Protestant Government to a Catholic Clergy, and these Clergy Irishmen. It was originally suggested by Mr. Oroker, and highly approved of by Lord Castlereagh, who Lord Wellesley, by-the-bye, said was a sincere friend of Ireland. It is a bribe, proposed as such, and must operate most perniciously. Waterdrops perforate stones by repetition, but in this case the drops are multiplied into showers, and each drop is specifically aggravated with an infusion of ponderous gold. Do I speak of things new and extraordinary, or of that which every

man does verify, daily and hourly, of the effect of money, and of money-worth, even in remote expectancies, on all mankind? He that does not know the effect of money in the hands of power—he who does not see its pregnant operation, is not only *sand-blind*, but, like Lancelot's doting father, Gobbo, *high gravel blind*; he wants both reason and sense.

The influence of receiving money, even granted for life, is decisive. Judges are not subject to the caprices of royalty for their places, their salaries are fixed and permanent; yet, who knows one Judge who has not a bias towards the prerogative? Not I. Clergymen of the establishment are not liable to be removed for liberal opinions, and yet, out of the thousands who minister before the altar, who of them sides with God's people against man's prerogative? Why should the Catholic Clergy be considered free from that aptitude, with which all men are afflicted? According to Mr. O'Connell, the principal Catholic Clergy are extremely prone to sacrifice in high places.—He says, "I know much and intimately the the opinions of the most influential of the Catholic Clergy in Ireland; if they have a political fault, it is a leaning to the Government, and a wish to identify themselves with the Government, and it is perhaps right, I should add, that there is no class of men more strongly inclined that way, than the leading men of that very College of the Jesuits, very clever men and highly cultivated."—*Evidence—Commons*, p. 121. I do not say so, and I hope not, but sure I am, their

leaning to Government is greatly exceeded by others. The conduct of the Prelates in London was exemplary—never were men placed in so trying a situation as the Catholic Prelates; the Pension Bill was decided on before they reached the capital: then they could only be consulted on the detail; thus, their disgrace was to be increased by making their admission appear general and voluntary. In their evidence they were beset by enemies, and friends worse than enemies, and various conflicting interests; yet, in this new and untried and most arduous situation, they acquitted themselves with such sagacity, that it affords a triumphant contrast to the conduct of our lay patriots. On the subject of pensioning the Clergy, they acted with ability equal to the difficulty of the task; and be it remembered, that all the Prelates who were questioned on that point expressed their wish and hope that they might be admitted to enjoy the voluntary donations of the people, instead of being obliged to accept of pensions from the treasury. Dr. Doyle published also this opinion in his Letters; he has renewed the same opinion, as appears by the Rev. Mr. Kinsella's letter to Mr. O'Connell. I believe this is the general sentiment, though probably some doubt, and some have no doubts, for there are eager appetites in all professions; but no one has had the hardihood publicly to avow his *auri sacra fames*, while many have denounced the imposition, and principally the Catholic Clergy of the diocese of Clogher, who came to the following resolution:—*October 25, 1825.*—The Right Rev. Dr. Kiernan in the chair—That the Provision

Wing was calculated to destroy the influence of the Catholic Clergy over their flocks, and that mutual dependence which was so vitally necessary should subsist between them. Since that meeting, this Bishop has declared his sentiments with such sincerity and energy, that all must see that Dr. Kiernan's is a *proof* interpretation.

The injury to the Catholic Priesthood would by this wing be multiplied in an extraordinary manner. The ecclesiastical pensions, as I have proved in a former publication, while they would increase the revenue of some dignitaries, and of some Priests in poor parishes, would reduce the revenues of the great body of the Catholic Clergy. Such would be the direct operation of the Pension Bill; this would occasion vexations, if not a schism, among the Clergy themselves; and the evils would increase. The people would become dissatisfied; as they are neither sophists nor sentimentalists, they would regard the Clergy, being paid by the Government, as an associated *Church Establishment*. Then they would become as remiss in paying dues as Protestants are in paying tithes; and the Catholic Clergy have no courts to enforce their pretences. Then would bickering be met with menaces, and defiance with violence. The conclusion would be calamitous. The people would be indifferent in their attendance, and many would fall off. Most certainly all this would relax the entire confidence of Pastors and their congregations—mutual cordiality would cease. Thus, in every view, the Pension Bill would destroy the identity of Priest and People.

Mr. O'Connell seems to consider this absolute community of feeling unsatisfactory, as he says, "it (paying the Clergy) certainly would have that tendency, and a useful tendency for the purposes of Government, I take it, because they would not be so much under the influence of very low people, as they necessarily are, when all their relations are in the lowest state of society."—*Evidence, Commons*, p. 125. My feeling is the reverse: I should rather have the Priesthood influenced by low than by high people: the people, though sometimes deceived, are always honest; and I wish most devoutly, that the people and Clergy may continue one and the same. No *golden links* for me, but "heaps of steel." I wish that the people should be theirs and they the people, for I believe that liberty in Ireland, though in a dormant state, shall still revive by the united zeal of Priests and people; and I consider pensioning them to be a fraud not only on their calling, their revenues, and their flocks, but a treason to those hopes which alone make existence in Ireland indifferent or to be endured.

As this sheet was passing through the Press, Mr. O'Connell's Letter on the Clerical Wing was published. In it he states, "Secondly, I should be justly accused of the guilt of presumption, if I thought that it were necessary for me to vindicate to the Irish people, the conduct, with respect to this measure, of the three Catholic Archbishops, and of the Catholic Bishops who attended in London; or the acquiescence of the other Catholic Archbishops and Bishops who re-

mained in Ireland." This is the prominent proposition in a letter, which abounds in love and honor for the Catholic Prelates. The community reprobate this Wing, and the *advocate* for the Prelates insists that they were not disinclined, but the contrary, to this most unpopular measure. This is strange.

"Thirdly," he says, "it was the general disposition to leave this ecclesiastical matter altogether to the Catholic Prelates, without any attempt, on the part of the laity, to interfere with it in any manner.

"Fourthly—It was the expressed and unanimous determination of the Deputation in London, to submit the matter entirely to the judgment of the Bishops." How, I ask, does all this differ in spirit from Mr. O'Connell's speech at Saint Audeon's Chapel, as reported *erroneously* by four different Reporters? Mr. O'Connell has, however, multiplied the victims he defends, by extending his charge from two to all the Prelates in London and in Ireland.

Mr. O'Connell says, "It was estimated in the House of Commons, by the supporters of this measure, that from two hundred and fifty to three hundred thousand pounds per annum would be sufficient for these purposes." That is for pensioning the Bishops, and giving two hundred a year to each Parish Priest, and seventy-five to each Curate. He adds, "I am convinced that such estimate was much under-rated; though I

cannot blame others for being mistaken in the amount, because, I acknowledge, that for one, I did myself form too low an estimate. But that error must necessarily have been corrected in the progress of the Bill into a law." What they estimated I do not know, but the proposition offered to the House by Lord L. Gower, was for 231,000*l*; the estimate then was less than the truth, and the actual proposition less than the estimate. This shows how anxious Mr. O'Connell and the supporters of the measure were to provide handsomely for the Clergy, and how likely it was that their proposition of 231,000*l*, in its course through the House, should be advanced to 500,000*l*. a year, which sum would be necessary now to carry this wing into operation, according to Mr. O'Connell. Mr. O'Connell insists, of course, that this wing can never be reproduced in Ireland.

In this letter Mr. O'Connell says nothing of the *golden link*, or of the Priests becoming *officers of Government*; on the contrary, he says *it would not have increased or extended the power or patronage of the Crown.*

Again, he says, the 200*l*. a year to each Priest, (though avowedly the quota to each Priest of the sum proposed to Parliament would not have given above half that amount) was to be granted to them for their ease and comfort, that is, the personal accommodation of the Priesthood: yet, by a mere turn of his pen, these pensions were, in a considerable degree, to be distributed in charity, and to extend education among their people.

Thus the public claims on the Clergy would have been increased or created by these paltry pensions. I call them paltry, and I showed, when this preposterous bribery scheme was contemplated, how inadequately the whole sum, to be distributed by the State provision, would compensate the Clergy for the emoluments which the arrangements would oblige them to relinquish: this Mr. O'Connell's letter verifies, and this is the only part of it that deserves attention. In other respects this letter is the weakest effort I have seen of Mr. O'Connell's ability. In general, as Tacitus said of the compositions of a man of his time, his writings, if not eloquent, bear the character of command. This here is wanting, and his professional artifice, which unmercifully obtrudes on all occasions, is here at once extreme and feeble. This whole letter is most irregular most feeble and false;* it is as a spent ball, which is turned aside by every impediment, till, having tumbled to and fro, enfeebled by every roll, it stops rocking on itself, at the lowest point of the varied surface of the ground.

We come now to the other wing, the disfranchisement of the forty-shilling freeholders. The origin of this bill is a little older than is generally imagined. When honest George Canning

* This extends to falsifying facts. In this letter Mr. O'Connell, talking of the Provision for the Clergy, says, "Each Parish Priest, *at the least*, £200 per annum.—and each Curate; *at the least*, £75 per annum." Now, *at the least* should be at the most. The arrangement was—Parish Priests, First Class, one-tenth of the whole Priesthood, £200 per annum; Second Class, four-tenths of the whole Priesthood, £120 per annum; the Third, and largest Class, were to have £80 per annum.

visited the Marquess Wellesley in the preceding summer, the extinction of the Catholic Association was decided. Among Mr. Canning's golden sayings, he lamented the state of the forty-shilling freeholders of Ireland; and it was consistent with the advocate of the Union, which swept off the Parliament, to exterminate the constituency of Ireland. This was to finish what Castle-reagh had begun.

Well: Emancipation was to be granted, for the Association was putting down. Then, as this was so taking with the Irish politicians, the Clerical Pension Bill was to be added; and then, as the Paddies in London were in so conciliating a temper, the Disfranchisement Bill was thrown into the bargain, in order to ensure Emancipation. To this there could be no objection, for, though nine-tenths of the freeholders would be disfranchised by it, it must have a fine moral effect, and reduce perjury and crime; and so would universal death leave the world in its original innocence.

For all political measures, there are two reasons—the true and the false; the true are of a domestic disposition, and seldom leave home; but the false are always abroad. It appears from Mr. O'Connell's statement, that the suggestion of the change in the elective franchise (not the disfranchisement, as that is an awkward term,) had been suggested for some time by members of Parliament, *connected with the Government*; they thought the elective franchise in counties, but not in cities, should be raised from 40s. to £5 or £10

The Government members were quite shocked with the immoralities practised at county elections, in which horror Mr. O'Connell joined, by talking of the quantity of perjury and crime committed in counties, lamenting, at the same time, the extraordinary influence of great landed proprietors over the forty-shilling freeholders. If these were not the pretences, but the reasons, boroughs and cities should be the first broken up by Mr. O'Connell and these Government gentlemen; for, with few exceptions, they are either close, one or two individuals having the property of the representation, or they are so corrupt that they are aptly designated rotten. If the evil be the preponderating influence of individuals, is not that influence unqualified in close boroughs?—Mark the contrast of a borough and a county in this respect. We are told of the overwhelming power of the Marquis of Waterford, in Waterford; but still it does not resemble at all the dominion in a close borough in any of its consequences.—The Marquis of Waterford is now courting his own freeholders; he has subscribed £200 to a Catholic Chapel, while his brother, the Primate, and patron of the close borough of Armagh, disregards all persons and interests; he increased his rental, while other landlords reduced theirs; he upholds tolls in Armagh, and he pertinaciously, and without qualification, opposes the establishment of a Mechanics' Institute in that city. So much for the superior independence of boroughs, while, if honesty and truth were objects with the Government members, rotten boroughs would be instantly extinguished; but rotten bo-

roughs are not, to be touched, now or hereafter : no, though bribery and perjury multiply on each other in them, to the curse of the electors, and the waste and ruin of all the candidates. This letter of Mr. O'Connell is the manifesto against the right of the many, and he is the herald.

Mr. O'Connell says this measure will be moral ; it will serve the lease-holder ; it will relieve the people. And thus, that very measure, which was obtained by the ablest men, and by fighting from parallel to parallel, is to be abandoned, as injurious to the best interests of the community. " But then," adds Mr. O'Connell, " as to the change in the elective franchise, that is a matter of serious consideration, and must be weighed well before it is adopted."—*Letter, March 16.*—And how was this *serious consideration* exhibited ? It was still worse than on the Clerical Wing ; the Bill was read a first time, the 22d of April ; it was then proposed by the Bill to disfranchise the forty-shilling freeholders, after the expiration of their present registries : this was afterwards enlarged, by granting to all who were registered before the passing of the Act, a right to re-register during the continuance of their lease ; and this was granted, observe, not in justice to the forty-shilling freeholders, whose right to vote was a part of the value of the lease, but expressly, according to Mr. Littleton, in hopes that this extension would *reconcile some to the measure, who had previously declared themselves its opponents.*—Well, the Bill was read ; but the oath, which the Bill required the voter to take, as specified in the

schedule, was not in the body of the Act; nor was it attached to it; nay, more, this Bill of *serious consideration* was proposed, and in progress, without one of its friends in the "collective wisdom" having inquired into the number of those whom they were going to disfranchise; and they would have proceeded if Sir Robert Wilson had not moved that a return should be made of the freeholders of Ireland, which return was not made to the House until the 9th of May, nearly three weeks after the introduction of the Disfranchisement Bill. This, beside the utter contempt which it proclaims towards the forty-shilling freeholders, is a volume in favor of the radical reform of Parliament. After the failure of these measures, some Irishmen, after awaking from their half year's sleep, determined to prevent the re-citation of the Disfranchisement Bill. The parishioners of St. Andrew's parish met to consider this wing and its fellow. Mr. O'Connell was in waiting, and among other extraordinary doings and sayings at this meeting, he stated that the measure was not a *Disfranchisement*, but an *Enfranchisement* Bill. Then *minus* is *plus*, though the interchange would not advance mathematical results.

Here is another tumble in this break-neck course, for Mr. O'Connell considers this measure essentially good in itself, and worthy of adoption on its own merits; yet it is in Mr. O'Connell's second letter to the Catholics of Louth, that he assumes a tone and language that startle men who are as free as he; if he rebukes the pari-

shioners of St. Andrew's Parish, for their presumption in denouncing "the Wings," he treats the Louth Catholics, for the same act, as vassals falling off from their liege lord: the language is dictatorial, *sic volo sic jubeo*, and he assumes their applause as his meed. It must be offered to him in what measure and on what terms he requires; he is rightful claimant of their "sweet voices." Irishmen, you have praised till praise is naught, till it is nauseous; you have injured the man in your unmeaning adulation: his fault is as much yours as his. Such wallowing and such ejaculations would injure any one, even the wisest, the most prudent, and the most reserved; it is this which corrupts citizens, and makes them aspire to royalty in republics; it increases the waywardness of old age, and so corrupts infancy and innocence, that children from a blessing become a curse; as the spoiled boy exhibits himself, while he exposes the cause, "Good, mother, all the parish says you have spoiled me, and so you may take the fruits on't."

In the second letter of Mr. O'Connell to the Catholics of Louth, he begins by noticing their resolutions with sheer contempt and grating asperity; he reproves them for passing a vote reprehending "the Wings," and another vote thanking him who had assented to "the Wings." This is, indeed, a contradiction in your proceedings; therefore, when the Wings are reprehended, as they will and must be, throughout Ireland, the resolvers being taught by this reproof of Mr. O'Connell, must omit the burthen of his

praises. Mr. O'Connell also considers the resolutions as *fantastic*, for having praised Mr. Plunkett, whom he calls *the great advocate of "the Wings."* Here again he is right, and let them and others learn at least to be consistent when they resolve again; however they were not singular. How often has Mr. O'Connell praised Mr. Plunkett, who promoted the Association Bill? And Mr. O'Connell lately, in speaking of Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, said "he could not in his conscience believe any man to be a friend to the Catholics, who voted against the Catholic Association."—*D. M. Post, December 5, 1825.*—Mr. O'Connell proceeds: "that is not all, you, Catholics of the County of Louth, were yourselves *silent*, and therefore manifestly *acquiescent*, while the Wings were in actual progress through the House of Commons; and now, long after they have been rejected and passed away, you take the vain trouble of condemning them; your condemnation, too, is not prospective, take notice—it refers merely to the past."

This is rather short measure to brother Catholic patriots, and running the statute of limitations somewhat beyond the spirit of the act. To condemn a measure attempted to have been passed, is not very remote from condemning its passing prospectively. What does Mr. O'Connell mean by *passed away*? Is it, as I suppose, another expression for *dead and buried*, which has been frequently used by the lovers of *temperance and union*? And yet Mr. O'Connell did, on the 2nd of November, state at the Association, "that

these measures might, and he thought would, be brought on again in Parliament, particularly that relative to the freeholders:" and that they will be re-produced I have frequently repeated, for though *past*, and *dead*, and *buried*, they will rise, like *Banquo's* murdered ghost, and "push us from our stools,"

Mr. O'Connell charges the Catholics of Louth, in the last paragraph from his letter just quoted, with being silent, and therefore *manifestly acquiescent*, when the Wings were actually in progress through the House. *Acquiescent!* a new word suits an unexampled situation. They were silent, and they now obtain just retribution for their taciturnity, as they are taunted by that very individual who invoked them to silence. Their offence was their submitting their judgment to his artifice and his dictation; yet it seems extraordinary, if not cruel, in Mr. O'Connell, to turn their silence, resulting in a great measure from his promises, against them. Mr. O'Connell solicited, on the 7th and the 16th of March, the absolute silence of all on "the Wings;" he said they need be in no hurry, that there would be ample time for discussion.—Mr. O'Connell did afterwards, on March 31st, write, "It is my intention to lay before them the state of the Catholic Question. I intend, for this purpose, to publish two or three letters on that subject during the ensuing week," &c. On the 5th of April, Mr. O'Connell gave his account of the Emancipation Bill, but nothing transpired respecting the Wings; but he added, that it was his *intention*,

in perhaps two letters more, to give the fullest information I can, on the two additional measures of a provision for the Catholic Clergy, and of the alteration in the elective franchise. Now this promise, made on the 5th April, was but partly fulfilled on the 3d of November, that being the date of Mr. O'Connell's second letter to the Catholics of Louth, in which letter he defers any observation on the other Wing, saying, "I will begin with the Freehold Wing, leaving the Ecclesiastical Wing for a later and more solemn consideration." The Catholics did wait, and wait as they were ordered, and if they had waited for the *fullest information*, they might have waited till doom's-day; but the Catholics of Louth at last acted for themselves, on their own information: thus shewing that their offence was a transient depression, and not, as in others, a confirmed abjectness, which must enslave them for ever, as they are incapable of exercising the liberty which they enjoy.

In the next paragraph the freeholders of Louth are rebuked with having Mr. Jocelyn and Mr. Leslie Foster, their representatives; and Mr. O'Connell considers that these Gentlemen, being returned for Louth, is a proof of the aristocratical evils of the system of forty-shilling freeholders. In this the great landholders do not agree with him; and even Mr. L. Foster, who knows as much of the interests of his family in Louth as Mr. O'Connell, is so little afraid of impairing the strength of the aristocracy, by disfranchising the forty-shilling freeholders, that though he admits

the bill "would have the effect of doing away about nine-tenths of the voters," (*Debate in the House of Commons*) he declares it does not go far enough. Considering that Mr. Foster and Mr. Jocelyn, and a pretty large body of similar politicians, swelled the majority for disfranchising the forty-shilling freeholders, and therefore sided with Mr. Plunkett and Mr. O'Connell, it is rather inartificial to find him rail at the adverse party, which he says "consists not only of some furious and red-hot patriots in Ireland, and in all the Americas, but also of the generous and enlightened friends of civil and religious liberty, Sir Thomas Lethbridge, &c. What a happy combination; the Emmets, Sampsons, and Mac Nevins of New York, playing second fiddle to the Peels, &c." Red-hot patriots of Ireland! Aye, said Sir Anthony Absolute, "Can't you be cool like me?" The Emmets, Sampsons, and Mac Nevins! I know William Sampson well, and I believe him to love Ireland sincerely. The other two Gentlemen I never saw, but they possessed talents, spirit, and consistency; and while they were thus traduced in Mr. O'Connell's reckless censure, they had, in their fervent zeal for their country, transmitted from the land of refuge a glorious testimony of their ever-enduring anxiety for Ireland. It is true, the friends of the forty-shilling freeholders had strange associates. "Misery acquaints a man with strange bed-fellows." The Lethbridges and Eldons did oppose the Disfranchisement Bill, not from any love of right, or liberality, or justice, but as the Tories opposed the Septennial Bill.

Mr. O'Connell asserts, that "this Wing was a Bill to *regulate* the forty-shilling freeholders; it was a Bill to enlarge the right of suffrage, and to increase the number of independent voters."—To *regulate* is a word of the craft; to "regulate" often means to impose a duty or tax, and often a severer restriction: thus, Mr. Pitt *regulated* public lectures; and I have myself seen a worthy magistrate, or some such familiar of Government, the assessor of a public lecturer.—"To regulate" means also to suppress; thus, in Charles the Second's time, Coffee-houses were *regulated*,* that is, shut up.

This *regulating* bill, which was to enlarge the right of suffrage, and increase the number of voters, Mr. O'Connell did, however, admit, "disfranchised one class of forty-shilling freeholders, but it established in its place two other classes, much more valuable and independent of control."

We shall see how Mr. O'Connell makes good this assertion. In the second letter to the Catholics of Louth he says, "You will recollect that no non-resident can now vote, unless he has a freehold of £20 a-year for one or more lives. Now the Freehold Wing reduced this qualification to £10 a-year; it therefore let in, by a single enactment, every man having now, or henceforth

* Roger North held, that selling coffee might be innocent, when persons did not assemble to discourse on matters of state, as a means "to discontent the people." Thus, the Government of Charles the Second was as fond of unanimity and silence as the leaders, when the Wings were to be discussed.

acquiring, a freehold income for his own or another life of £10 a year," &c. This is not a right view of the bill; I consider that every one possessing a freehold for his own or another life, of ten pounds and under twenty pounds, must be effectually a resident. The bill states, "And be it further enacted, that from and after the commencement of this act, every person registering a freehold in any county at large in Ireland, under the annual value of twenty pounds, derived under and by virtue of a lease made for a less term than for lives renewable for ever, shall take the following oath upon the occasion of his registering the same, instead of the oath now by law required to be taken upon such occasions." The oath follows, of which the following are the material parts:

"I, A. B., do swear, that I am a freeholder of the county of, &c. and that I have a freehold therein, arising from a house (or, from houses, lands, &c.) of the clear yearly value of ten pounds at the least, above all charges, &c.; that I am in the actual occupation thereof, by residing thereon, (or, by tilling, or by grazing, or by both tilling and grazing, *as the case may be,*) to the amount of at least ten pounds yearly value thereof, and that the said freehold is not set, or agreed to be set, to the person or persons who executed the said deed," &c.

We may therefore dismiss this whole class, so valuable and *independent of control*. These airy nothings to whom Mr. O'Connell, in dearth of facts, in a fine frenzy, gave a local habitation and a name: as every holder of a freehold, for his

own or another life, must be in actual occupation thereof by residence thereon, &c. The other valuable class admitted by the Freehold Wing, I should say Mr. O'Connell's *Emfranchisement Bill*, are small *non-resident* freeholders in fee, or for indeterminable leases.

Suppose it right that non-residents should have a vote, though the best mode of taking the poll of a nation would necessarily give all one vote, and none more than one. Mr. O'Connell says, in admiration of *non-resident* voters under the Wing: "Under the Freehold Wing, how many hundreds and thousands are there in Ireland of independent industrious men, who would buy a forty-shilling freehold, when they could have a right to vote without being tied down to occupy a freehold." I should answer, not one thousand, nor one hundred. And here I must observe, that while Mr. O'Connell is so enraptured with *non-residents* in this letter to the Catholics in Louth, he, in his letter of the 7th of March, lamented "the preponderating influence which the forty-shilling freeholders give to the great proprietors over the *resident* intellect and honesty of the county, &c. As to the *hundreds* and *thousands* industrious men, eager to purchase a right to vote, that requires a preparatory quere in return. To make a market, there must be purchasers and sellers, which implies money on one side and commodities on the other. Now where, in Ireland, are the thousands of industrious men, able and willing to purchase these forty-shilling freeholds? And again, where are these free-

holds to be purchased? From Mr. O'Connell's statement, one would suppose such Irish freeholds could be created like the bubbles of the day, and be purchased to any amount by brokers in every County Court house.—By the return to the House of Commons, of the freeholders of Ireland, it appears that in fourteen counties there are no forty-shilling freeholders, possessing property in fee; that in five other counties, the returning officer can state nothing respecting such forty-shilling freeholders, probably from their paucity or non-existence. Longford has a large number apparently; in Wexford they are also considerable, being an hundred and twenty-seven; Clare, Cork, Down, have each from 50 to 67; Kerry has seven; Cavan six, Antrim four, Carlow two; while the forty-shilling leasehold freeholders approach, by the return, nearly to 200,000, which this wing would disfranchise. I refer the reader to the Appendix for the detail on this particular. Suppose, however, there were many small, fee simple and indeterminate leaseholds to be sold, who most likely would purchase them? Not persons living remote from the county, but actually within its pale, or in the very neighbourhood of the thing purchased. Such sales could not be of public notoriety; they would necessarily be confined to the vicinage, and it is just as likely that the purchasing neighbour should be a landlord and freeholder already, as that he should be neither. Thus, then, these two valuable and independent bodies of freeholders, which the freehold wing was to bring into being, are in one case not one, and in the other few

indeed, the reason assigned for these eager thousands of non-residents to obtain a freehold is—not a return for their purchase money, but the *bonus* of a vote every seven years.*

We now advance to another position of Mr. O'Connell. He says, raising the freehold qualification to ten pounds would originate a *substantial yeomanry*, which is to be done, according to him, by a landlord of a farm worth £20 setting it for £10. He was questioned, "You stated that many persons would be willing to make the sacrifice; who are the persons who would have the sacrifice to make?" to which he answered, "the land proprietors; the owners of the fee. The landlord giving the lease would have to make the sacrifice, if he constituted a freeholder of ten pounds a-year. When he made the lease, he would get for his land about £20 a-year, if he did not make the man a freeholder, that is, a vote; he would get but £10 a-year, if he wished the man should have a vote, for the income must come out of the landlord's rent, and therefore it is a sacrifice."—*Evidence, Lords, page 164.*—This is strange—it is most strange, that these landlords, whom Mr. O'Connell says, in the same page, oblige the forty-shilling freeholder to pay

*To exemplify this extravagance, I am obliged to make the following statement:—At the close of last Term, a Catholic Baronet, who is frequently Chairman of Aggregates, stated to my friend, Eccles Cuthbert, he had estates in seven different counties; yet he had never registered his freeholds. Mr. C. having expressed his surprise, proposed, to the Baronet forthwith to assist him to have his votes registered, which could have been done immediately, without any trouble, the Courts being then sitting.—"No," replied the Catholic Baronet, "I thank you, but I would rather not, it might some day put one to the trouble of a jaunt; I'll not mind it."

*a heavy rent for the land beyond which they swear they have a profit rent, should set their lands at half value, merely to make a £10 freeholder. My view of the consequences of raising the freehold qualifications to 10*l.*, in such circumstances, is quite different. I believe the forty-shilling freeholds would be converted into ten pound freeholds, by setting the same lands in larger tracts to fewer individuals, who would re-set portions of them in cabins and gardens to the present forty-shilling freeholders. That is all would be deteriorated; the poorer forty-shilling freeholders would be rendered much poorer, and both would sink into cottiers and middle-men.*

It is said, that by raising the freehold qualification, the voters would be more independent. More independent! Does any one believe landlords aim at the independence of their tenants?—All this trumpery stuff from Government Members, and the landed aristocracy, proves a general feeling, that the forty-shilling freeholders are not automaton moved by agents and bailiffs.—More independent! this arises from a idea, that because men ought to be more independent they will be so. I have never found opulence, or the approaches to it, increase independence; on the contrary, I have found men almost uniformly become aristocrats as they become rich, and timorous and feeble as their hoards accumulated.—What! says Mr. O'Connell himself on this question, which directly meets his own imputation, “Do you think that mere persuasion would induce the tenantry of an Irish landlord to incur

the risk of his displeasure?—I do certainly; I have seen intense interest in a forty-shilling freeholder; and he is, after all, so near the labourer, though there is a grade between them, that if his feelings are warm, he will make the sacrifice, and become a labourer; and then, on the other hand, the persons in whose interest he has voted, will be induced to pay a gale's rent, which is the utmost that can be due of him to clear him of rent; and then he is able to pay his rent in future, and his landlord has not dominion over him.”—*Evidence, Commons, p. 80;*

I have known the poor freeholder risk every thing: who of the richer classes of freeholders would be so chivalrous? which of them would risk falling a grade by following these forty-shilling freeholders in their contempt of consequences? Would Mr. O'Connell, who has talked so frequently of his sacrifices, and even counted the pounds in his fee-book, to particularise his loss of income during one term? Would the 50*l.* or 20*l.* freeholders, or the 10*l.* middle-men, that muck-worm at once grub and chrysalis? If you expect devotedness and public spirit beyond all calculation, you must look to the very people. That the forty-shilling freeholders have power, and exercise it is notorious, in the South, East, West, North, and in the County of Armagh, no way radical; they, themselves, returned a Member in opposition to the great proprietors of the county; the forty-shilling freeholders are shackled, and so all will be while property remains in such tremendous masses as war, and spoil, and confiscation, have cast it in

Ireland; and this will operate on all freeholders, and most intensely on those of the higher grade, who aspire to places in the police, the excise, customs, stamp-office, county courts, and to all those places, within the sphere of patronage and influence, suited to persons apt and eager to advance in life. If there be the least truth in this cant of independence, and of a wish to improve the constituency, the means are obvious and easy. Let the freeholders vote by ballot; it is as universal in America as universal suffrage itself, and it has been adopted in many institutions in England, and in all the Mechanics' Institutes in Great Britain and Ireland.

The charges against the forty-shilling freeholders are slanderous and contradictory. If a freeholder obtain a beneficial lease from his landlord, that is not bribery, for a freehold implies a beneficial holding. Then, who is to bribe the tenantry? the candidate or his agent, opposed to the landlord. If so, such practices negate the clamours of the dominion of the landlord over his tenantry. But landlords oblige tenants to swear they have a beneficial lease, when they have not; this is a crime in the landlords, in the first instance, and they should be punished; and tenants should be secured from committing such offences, and this would be partly effected, I repeat, by enabling tenants to vote by ballot, for entirely to destroy the influence of property in political affairs, would be as extravagant as to attempt to abstract gravita-

tion from matter; and I also repeat, it is in boroughs, rotten and close, that tyranny, and bribery, and perjury prevail; that in counties these are of rare occurrence. I testify, that in the North these crimes are seldom committed, and Dr. England, with great practical experience, testifies for the South in his sensible and feeling letters. Mr. O'Connell cannot object to his evidence, as he calls him "one of the cleverest, and, I think, one of the worthiest men I ever knew, the present Catholic Bishop of Charleston, in North America, the Right Rev. Dr. England."—*Evidence before the Commons, page 79.*—But, suppose some forty-shilling freeholders in counties are perjured, it is not said by the worst enemies of the people that they are the majority. To disfranchise all on this account, is to disfranchise the many for the crimes of the few, who are rather the landlords than the tenants. Suppose, also, that the forty-shilling freeholders are most dependent, and that neither by ballot, nor by any other means, they can be relieved from their obedience: suppose all this for the weakness of the reasons, secure the defenders of the forty-shilling freeholders, to grant all the assumptions of their enemies, what compensation are the freeholders to obtain for their losses as freeholders?—(I do not speak of their being turned adrift, to enable landlords to raise out of their wreck 10*l.* freeholds.)—What compensation are they to receive for being sacrificed, in order that the Catholic gentry should have a few individual chances to be returned to the Commons, and that Catholic

Barristers should have a bad chance to be raised to the Bench, and that Catholic Lords should have no chance to be Representative Peers, but to have the glory to vote for one; and are these chances to compensate forty-shilling freeholders for their leases, and they are not few nor important? I shall quote, without commentary, Mr. O'Connell's evidence to these points, before the Commons, on March the 1st:—

“ I know the peasantry are anxious to register themselves; they feel the value of it.

“ You think that quite the lower classes of the peasantry put a value upon the freehold?

“ A great value; they feel that it makes them of importance; they must once in seven years be courted, and in the mean time be attended to.

“ In those cases do the freeholders put any great value upon their franchise?

“ In those cases the franchise is of value, for it gives, where it is a *bona fide* term, a life; and in Ireland, where land is so valuable to the peasant, having a long term, is always valuable.

“ Is there any great anxiety on the part of those tenants to have leases?

“ Great anxiety; all the peasantry in Ireland, I think, are extremely anxious to get a lease.

“ Supposing it were proposed to grant those persons a lease for twenty-one years without a life, would not they be desirous that a vote should be annexed?

“ Very desirous, in order to have a chance of an increased term, in addition to the twenty-one years, and very desirous of having a freehold tenure.

"Does the elective franchise form a part of that desire?"

"It does."

"You have mentioned, that the landlords count the freeholders?"

"To a certain extent they do."—p. 79-80, *Evidence, Commons*.

Such are some of the benefits of the freehold franchise, according to Mr. O'Connell, that this Disfranchisement Bill would withdraw from the freeholders of Ulster, who are admitted to be of a superior order, and amidst a population in that one province, nearly equal in numbers to the whole population of Scotland; such are the injuries and insults that this Disfranchisement Bill would visit on a body of men approaching two hundred thousand individuals, amidst a population of more than seven millions of men, and by whom? by those and their associates who were elected by them to Parliament. Thus the power of the people is used to make them powerless. Their representatives, the creatures of their franchise, propose to disfranchise them, and at the same time to divest them of their pride, their comfort, their consolation, their vital interests, their freeholds; and for what? for a silk gown for practising barristers; for a Catholic lord's vote for a Protestant peer, Farnham or Mountcashel; for a Catholic gentleman's ineffectual negative, or his supernumerary aye, in an alien Protestant parliament; for these comparative fictions, for these nothings, compared to the wants of Ireland, the interests, the existence of the hardy sons of the soil are to be sacrificed: and with the

consent of Catholic Lords and of Catholic Gentlemen, with the cheerful concurrence of all the vetoists, with the sentimental consent and moral approbation of Mr. O'Connell, the rights and interests of the peasantry of Ireland are to be sacrificed—the rights of those very men, who, hearing the call of the brawlers, gave what they had, and what they could borrow, to swell the Catholic Rent. Was ever such a deed attempted, or justified in such circumstances! I challenge any man to exhibit its counterpart, and I will rent the fate of the whole argument on the uniqueness of the iniquity: no term, or complication of terms, heartlessness, selfishness, ingratitude, treachery, altogether, cannot express the deep damnation of this monstrous deed.

I have still a few observations to make in defence of the people. The Government Paper imputes the crime of silence respecting the Wings to the Prelates, to the Priesthood, and to the people. This Journal can do neither good nor evil; like some other patriots, it is in the wane, and shall fall, never to rise again. The *Dublin Evening Post*, though a patron of the Marquess of Wellesley's administration, and a ready friend of Mr. Plunkett in all his necessities, deserves, however, some notice. The *Post*, or Mr. Conway, said not long since, "The time is approaching, in which it will be incumbent on the Catholics of Ireland to take a decisive and distinct attitude in regard to them (the Wings)." Why they have taken and preserved this attitude so distinctly, that they have not endangered its de-

cision by opening their mouths. The attitude of the Catholics resembles the illustration of Shakespeare's "Patience on a monument smiling at Grief." Does Mr. Conway's metaphorical attitude mean, that the Catholics should *spea*k out on the Wings? If the people should speak out, should not the Press speak out or speak in? Should it not, at least, indulge in a little ventriloquism? Or, if that should be too great an exertion, why did not the *E. Post* speak by implication, and afford the people an opportunity of judging of the Wings, by publishing Dr. England's Letter? Yet it was better to suppress, altogether, the Bishop of Charleston's letter, than to publish, in a mutilated manner, the speech of Doctor Doyle at Carlow, in reply to Mr. O'Connell.

But my greatest objection to Mr. Conway is an attempt to involve the people in his own condemnation. He says, "The Association may be blamed, and that portion of the Press to which we belong may be blamed, for not acting explicitly during the conjuncture; but if the Association be culpable, the Catholics of Ireland are culpable also." Suppose so: and to rob a gooseberry garden, and to fire a city, are both criminal acts, but in what comparative degree? The Catholics of Ireland are a loose, incongruous body, as are the people of all countries; not so the Association; it subsisted for days after the tremendous disclosure, and it was silent; yet how innocent was the silence of the Association, during its eight days lingering existence, to the silence of the Press, which daily and hourly, and for

many months, was circling and intersecting these hated measures in all directions, yet wounded them no more than a wand the impassive air.

What could the people do, deserted by those who hitherto presumed to direct them?—and when the few who dared to raise their voice for them, were hissed, hooted, persecuted, maligned; when even the means by which they and their families subsisted, were menaced with ruin; what could the people do in the emergency, in this state of abandonment? They used the only means that were open to them; they communed among themselves, they denounced the Wings, as their opportunities afforded. I have heard all sorts of labourers and tradesmen condemn them; peasants, weavers, Skerries' sailors, and fishermen from Arklow; and where the forty-shilling freeholders might be heard, they reprobated publicly the insult offered to them, as at the Cavan Meeting. Yet here the malice of the faction so operated; that these indignant forty-shilling freeholders were, what is technically called, reported *short*; that is, their statements were comprised in the narrowest and least effectual compass.

The mere people were not silent, nor were all the people, Catholics and Protestants, affected with abject taciturnity, as we hear of “the undergrowth of poor Jack Lawless, and his few and foolish partizans.” Was Mr. Cobbett foolish? He has been laboriously abused till it seemed that Billingsgate and the Blind-Quay had made common cause with the Poddle. Mr. Cobbett

was long since promised an answer—as he is still unanswered, the conclusion is obvious, “Few and foolish partizans?”

“ Besides proud——be not vain
Of what thou call'st thy slaves and train ;
Few follow Wisdom and her rules,
Fools, in decision, follow fools.”

Nor was I silent, who am one of the people, and who shall never condescend to accept any mis-called higher distinction. I did, on the first public intimation of what seemed to me a dangerous intercourse, write to an individual in London, assuring him that the Irish would never be satisfied with less than their entire rights. I at the same time spoke unceremoniously of a certain individual, high in authority. I addressed the Editor of the *Weekly Register*, when the Wings were first announced by the *Special Reporter*; the purport of the letter was to request him to deny the slander, that any portion of the Catholics would consent to disfranchise their countrymen. Mr. Staunton kindly made public this private application. I then wrote a letter denouncing the wings, which accidentally never appeared. I published a letter the 22d of March, another on April the 3d. After this letter I communicated my opinions to the gentleman before alluded to in London, requesting him, if he had altered his sentiments on the wings, to own the change, and to acknowledge his error. I told him that an unreserved avowal would prevent infinite vexations and difficulties to him, and I stated that, ultimately, these measures must be abandoned.

Finding no change in this person's conduct or opinions, I was obliged to continue my course, and successively published different letters, April 11, 18, 26, May 22, and June 5th, and finding the same scheming, and artifices, and delusions, with renewed outrages, continued, I have been forced to resume my appeal to my countrymen. In the beginning of 1815 I wrote a pamphlet against the Veto; at the close of 1825 I write another against a Veto, against pensioning the Catholic Clergy, and against disfranchising Catholics, Protestants, and Dissenters. All the people were, I admit, blameable in a minor degree; and yet I find a difficulty in stating the charge in this qualified manner, for how were they beset and trepanned; for in low intrigue, in trick, in management, in confederate operations, in occasional paragraphs, in innuendos, in getting up a timely procession or a triumphal entry, in voting a bit of plate in one place, and shooting it point blank at another, our Irish patriots excel all posture-masters and machinists that ever appeared on this or any other stage. In the hands of such adepts what could the people do? First, their dear friends did carefully impress on them the danger of talking about the "Wings;" the Pensioning and Disfranchisement Bills were to be approached with a mysterious dread, as the Furies were called Reverend by the astonished Pagans.

In aid of this reverential feeling, the people were told, in the first letter from London, "We shall have full time to deliberate on all its (the

Bill) clauses." In the second despatch they were told, that the project was only in *embryo*, and might never be brought forth. Then followed an assurance of an *intention* to give the people of Ireland the *real state of the Catholic Question*, which resembled Mr. Sheff's "intimation of an intention." Again, in a fourth letter, the same prospect was offered of a full explanation, which ended in greater perplexity than *Joseph Surface's* explanation of the *whole and full account* of the screen scene. All this time silence was enjoined, not more intensely than by Harry Dundas, when he shut the ports preparatory to his Catamaran expedition to Cadiz; or by the present Emperor Francis of Austria, who, by his political catechism, requires silence in times of war, because, he says, the people must be ignorant of events. Our Leaders, advancing above the Austrian despot, required silence on notorious facts in times of peace.

To confirm taciturnity, the leaders paraded the 69 peers repeatedly on the scene, and their advice of firmness, temperance, and union, (though union is rather an inauspicious term,) was expanded into large letters—*Corinthian Capitals*! If some uneasiness was expressed on the Pensioning and Disfranchisement Bills, the Leaders cried they were gone—dead and buried—passed away. Were any still importunate, and utter their opinions, by one it was declared they should be *put down*, while another clamoured *crush it*.—Thus, bullies knock down, and then jump on their antagonist. This advice for decisive proceedings

was also urged without effect. Then the people were directed to petition for *unqualified emancipation*. But it is not to be forgotten, that Mr. O'Connell called, in that letter in which he advocated the Wings, the measure, *unqualified emancipation*. This was also ineffectual. Then Mr. Sheil, several times in November, advised, that the discussion of the Wings should be postponed till they were actually brought into Parliament. Thus Mr. Sheil ends as Mr. O'Connell began, and their conjunct practices resemble the emblematical serpent—its tail in its mouth.

It was prudent to advise the people to prepare their weak resistance, when the confederate forces were armed and in action. Surely, never were such leaders, since the boyish break-neck sport of "Follow the Leader" was invented. This is not, cannot be, the advice of friends! No, it is "a weak device of the enemy."

Do these Leaders, who are threatened with having their Clergy pensioned and their people disfranchised, promise, when the bills are enacting, to call meetings to assist in arresting their progress? No; Mr. O'Connell said, at the last Carlow Meeting, "I am ready, if these questions should be brought forward again, nay I will do it now, by the strongest resolution that can be formed, to sever our petition from the Wings." But still his writings and speeches justify the Wings on their intrinsic merits. His statements intimate, that though the Wings ought to be separated from the Bill, they should be supported

as independent measures. Besides, when the condemnation of these measures was proposed by Mr. O'Gorman, at this Carlow Meeting, the question was evaded, by remitting a judgment on them to the consideration of the particular counties. This is not unlike the craft of a Newgate Attorney, to screen an old offender from judgment and execution; this is at once contemptible and portentous—contemptible to have the affairs of a great and suffering nation submitted to pettyfogging and manœuvring—portentous, as it must, if successful, end in the absolute degradation of the Irish people.

The object of Mr. O'Connell is, as far as words indicate intentions, that the Disfranchisement Bill should be received in Parliament by itself, though it and its fellow were introduced last Session, to facilitate the passage of the Relief Bill, which every one, without exception, are satisfied had a contrary effect: so much for Mr. Plunkett's capacity, their matchless originator. Mr. O'Connell has repeatedly declared their pernicious tendency for the purposes for which they were ostensibly brought forward. Thus, they were not to be condemned, according to Mr. O'Connell, though their connexion with the Relief Bill should be deprecated; they are, therefore, to be treated with reserve, lest any liberty with them might injure their future reception in Parliament. Catholics, Irishmen, by submitting to such practices, you assist in swindling yourselves. If you have any favor for them, add daring to injustice, and state the fact, that those knowing the coming catas-

trophe, and who have outlived the Union, but who have not strength to bear a repetition of the shock, may prepare to bid everlasting adieu to their condemned country.

But it is obvious, that almost all, except here and there a few gatherings of trained confederates, are hostile to the Pensioning and Disfranchisement Bills. Then why are not the people relieved from this double-headed incubus? Oh! to prevent dissension and disunion: and are the Catholics united? The utmost distraction prevails among them, and the cause is an attempt, by insincerity and procrastination, to prevent the indignation of the country from being recorded against the common treason—against the Clergy and people.

How can reprobating the wings promote dissension? Who are the dissentients? I have not heard any one since the dissolution of Parliament speak in favor of them, except Mr. O'Connell and the *Patriot Newspaper*: all have condemned them who have expressed an opinion on the subject. Then, whose dissension is feared? Are you, or any of you, afraid, that Mr. O'Connell will singly cause disunion? Suppose he should, in his resentment, secede, can Catholic affairs be more desperate than they are now, mainly in consequence of their mismanagement during and since the last Session of Parliament? I had surely no objection to Mr. O'Connell; our acquaintance amounted only to meeting about three times in very public places; yet I concurred with many of his views, and I

have applauded his exertions. I am now, however, utterly opposed to his pursuits, and particularly to his attempt to give to the English Government an implied authority, by the silence of Irishmen, to rout the forty-shilling freeholders out of the land of their fathers, and to draw the Catholic Clergy, by themselves, and their relatives, within the vortex of Court corruption. Were O'Connell twined with me, were he my oldest and dearest friend, when he continued to advocate such measures against people and Priesthood, I should say, as of old, *asque ad aras amicus*; and I do say to him in grief and humiliation at my former confidence in him, rouse from your infatuation; shake off that slough which the blandishments of Great Britain involed you; quit again the *Dixie* from which Dr. England formerly withdrew you, in pure selfishness do it; think not, be not so mad as to think, that you can resist the general feeling. Long since, one of less tact might have seen by the starts of passion, (as gusts of smoke along the crater's side denote the fuelled extracts within,) the commotions of the public mind; and there are many direct notices of alterations in the public opinion, as on the ballotting for a Committee of twenty-one, you were only a sixth—Mr. N. Mahon headed you.

Whether my advice be taken or not, and I own it is rather a forlorn hope, you, my countrymen, have no pretence to incur, by your silence on the Pensioning and Disfranchising Bills, a repetition of the charges against yourselves and ancestors, preparatory to passing the Act of Union, that

you acquiesced, and by your silence secured its success; but what caused your silence then? If you were silent, you were promised Emancipation. What now causes silence? A vaporing about disunion, when the millions are at one side, and Mr. O'Connell and the confederate units on the other. A fear of disunion! Though these measures, and a dread of their revival, have originated and continued the variance and distraction among us: you are called, my countrymen, to restore, as far as you have power, the Irish to that state of confidence and cordiality, which they enjoyed when they sought Emancipation; before Prelates were to be bribed, or the people disfranchised. Will you increase our distraction or secure our peace? Will you be silent, or declare your opinion?

See, my countrymen, how sadly you have fallen abroad; you have read the sentiments of the Irish in America, and believe me, their discourse is much more poignant than their writings, and you have a notice from Glasgow to the same effect.—Look to England and her periodical Press. Why, your former friends are ranged with your enemies. Look to your own domestic affairs—the Catholic Rent. Mr. O'Connell, in his letter of June 28, to the Catholics of Ireland, said, “I will, myself, collect a new Catholic Rent.” This sinecure was conferred on Mr. Dwyer the latter end of November, when it was stated there were no funds to afford education to the people. Observe, also, the Parliamentary aspect of Catholic affairs. Mr. O'Connell said on the 29th, “that several of their

friends advised them not to agitate the question, the ensuing Session in the House of Commons, but merely in the House of Lords, as that agitation would endanger the seats of several of their friends." And Mr. O'Connell said, November 23, "there were always hopes of the Lords till the last time." Such is the state of Irish affairs, at home and abroad, and mainly by the treacherous and unholy measures, the Pensioning and Disfranchising Bills. My countrymen, you have fallen, and you are falling; your moral character is impeached, for some of you, most unnaturally, while they petitioned for their rights, offered, in part payment, to sacrifice the rights of their countrymen. A cause so connected cannot succeed—the soul of man revolts at it—all the charities of life protest against it. And will you, who debate, and associate, and meet in committees, and resolve, not protest also against this iniquity? If you do not, you cannot be emancipated; the enjoyment of liberty is beyond your functions, for you now endure, wilfully, an unenforced submission, a thousand times more abject than any exclusion Government inflicts on you.

If you persist in this base reserve, as infatuation precedes perdition, you will be the most wretched of the human race—tyranny from England, general distrust, and continued enmity at home; unpitied and condemned throughout the world. You will become, by silently sacrificing your poor countrymen, who offered up themselves and their pittance for you, as the Jews after the dread sacrifice, a mocking and a scorn, and a bye-

word among the nations of the earth. Then be *time-servers* no longer; hasten, for the occasion presses; every day is counted against your credit and against your countrymen. These ruinous measures will be again proposed to Parliament; that is certain, because they are destructive of Ireland's hope, and one of them will be re-introduced this coming Session, unless the universal voice be raised against it. The friends of this hated measure are powerful. All who dread, or who pretend to dread, Popery and Priests, favor them; the old Vetoists favour them, they welcome their re-appearance as a long absent friend. The English Catholics, those at least who hold the leading strings of their countrymen, favour them, for by them the English Catholics would lose nothing, and gain much, while the Irish would lose much and gain little, and the less the better, in their apprehension, for while the English Catholics sympathise with the Irish Catholics; in respect of their religion, they are averse to them in respect of their country. Beside these favourers of these Bills, all borough-mongers favour them, and directly the Disfranchisement Bill, as it would, by such a contraction of the constituency, give credit to the confined representation of boroughs. The great landed proprietors favour it, for the forty-shilling freeholders have become very unmanageable to the lords of the soil. In aid of all these orders and interests favourable to the Disfranchisement Bill, all the Ministers—all connected with Government, notwithstanding the coquetry of some—all the aristocracy—all who aspire to prerogative honors, and who regard the people as their natural enemies, favour the disfranchisement of the Irish; it will

prostrate Ireland, and it will become a precedent for subjugating Great Britain. Every thing conspires to induce a belief, that this Bill will be speedily re-introduced into Parliament. By Mr. Plunkett's letter to Mr. Maguire, it would seem that he, himself, intends to propose it to the Legislature, as he says, in that letter, *November 28*, referring to the Wings, which the Catholics of Fermanagh distinctly disapproved, "They (the Catholics) have done me the justice to know, that I prefer their interests to their wishes, and that my object is not to use, but to serve them." Oh, most sagacious of the race of Adam!—great advocate of the Wings, "the cause of all our woe;"—you advocated the pensioning of the Catholic Clergy, and the disfranchising nine-tenths of the electors of Ireland, for the interests, though against, the wishes of the people. This is unmatched in Ministerial effrontery: and you will treat the Catholics, *not to use, but to serve them*, most disinterested man! No doubt, Mr. Plunkett will serve the Catholics as he served that party with which he was so long associated. But then, my countrymen, you cannot expect he will serve you better than he served the Whigs. And how did he serve them? If you believe he will serve you better than he did serve the Whigs, his political Protestant associates for thirty years, you may believe any thing; you may believe you are emancipated; you may believe that Ireland enjoys a reformed resident Parliament, which is Ireland's want, and which embraces all her wants; you may believe any thing, and every thing that amuses you, for

you have absolute mastery over your will and your belief.

My countrymen, listen no longer to such impertinencies and outrage—act with respect to the Pensioning and Disfranchisement Bills, as you did in 1815, when Clergy and Laity denounced the Veto.





APPENDIX.

IRISH FREEHOLDERS.

	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.
Antrim	6,062	4	127	389	6,572
*Armagh..	6,802	—	145	129	7,076
Carlow.	3,073	2	100	313	3,548
Cavan	7,104	6	218	486	7,814
Clare.	12,968	67	327	605	13,967
Cork.	14,909	57	793	2,106	15,865
Down	13,274	50	147	644	14,115
*Dublin	2,147	—	591	600	3,338
*Fermanagh.....	4,166	—	128	173	4,462
*Kerry	5,537	—	438	741	6,176
†Kildare	761	—	103	370	1,234
†Kilkenny	589	—	63	520	1,172
†King's	377	—	48	819	1,244
†Leitrim	2,950	—	113	45	6,108
†Limerick	10,793	—	774	1,219	11,786
Londonderry.....	4,213	7	83	364	4,657
Longford	1,765	1,341	125	292	3,523
Louth	—	—	—	—	2,909
†Mayo	19,987	—	157	318	20,462
†Meath	1,080	—	62	663	1,805
*Queen's	4,483	—	225	762	5,470
†Roscommon	8,686	—	199	441	9,325
†Tipperary	6,180	—	562	6,002	12,744
†Tyrone	8,779	—	155	108	9,042
†Waterford	2,119	—	114	333	2,566
†Westmeath.....	2,275	—	131	441	2,847
†Wexford	8,067	127	452	580	9,226
†Wicklow	1,086	—	59	257	1,402
	163,221	1,661	6,494	19,710	191,086

The above table is formed from No. 312 of the Parliamentary Papers. Column A contains the 40s. Leasehold Freeholders—B. the 40s. Freeholders possessing Estates in fee—C. the £20 Freeholders—D. the Freeholders of £50 and upwards—and E. the totals of the four preceding columns. In the Counties marked *, it is uncertain whether there are any 40s. Freeholders in fee; and in the columns marked †, it is certain that there are none. The County of Fermanagh is estimated at only half the number registered, because the Officer states that there are not more than half that can now vote, many being dead, and many twice registered. It seems very doubtful whether the numbers 1,341, in column B., for the County of Longford, and 6,002, in column D., for the County of Tipperary, are correct. They are both, probably, much beyond the truth.

To the 163,221, are to be added the proportion of, probably, 2,500 for Louth. The 40s. Freeholders of Galway and Sligo, not enumerated, amount to 21,522, which were not returned when the list was presented to Parliament; and the 40s. Freeholders of Donegal, of which I have seen no return. I should observe, many of the Freeholders are doubly registered, but many are not registered, and many more are Freeholders in effect, though the Landlords are not enabled to make them leases.

WORKS

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